

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 00879 041645Z

67

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INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 0879

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, XT, PO, SP, IT AU

SUBJECT: COUNCIL OF EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT
ON SITUATIONS IN PORTUGAL, SPAIN AND ITALY

REF: VIENNA 0868

1. IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS ON DISCUSSION OF INADEQUACY OF
TINDEMANS' REPORT FOR EC-NONE AS IT RELATES TO QUESTION OF
BROADER WEST EUROPEAN COOPERATION (REFTEL), PRESIDENT OF
COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY, AUSTRIAN
SOCIALIST MP KARL CZERNETZ, TOLD EMBASSY LABATT FEBRUARY 2
THAT TALKS AT ELSINORE, BONN, BRUSSELS, AND STRASBOURG
IN PAST FORTNIGHT, PLUS EARLIER ONES WITH ITALIAN POLITICAL
LEADERS IN ROME, CONVINCE HIM THAT SERIOUS SOCIALIST
SITUATIONS VIS-A-VIS COMMUNISTS IN SOUTHERN EUROPE
ARE NOT AS BLEAK AS THEY ONCE APPEARED. HE THOUGHT
FRENCH SOCIALISTS WERE ABLE TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES
BUT WRONGLY EQUATED THEIR SITUATION WITH THAT OF
OTHERS. HIS COMMENTS ON PORTUGUESE, SPANISH AND
ITALIAN SITUATIONS FOLLOW.

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PAGE 02 VIENNA 00879 041645Z

2. PORTUGAL. CZERNETZ SAID SOARES BELIEVES DANGER OF

COUP AGAINST DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN PORTUGAL HAS ABATED ON BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT, NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD BE READY BY SPRING, AND ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN LATE APRIL OR IN MAY. SOARES ALSO THOUGHT HIS SOCIALIST PARTY WAS IN GOOD SHAPE, HAVING OVERCOME WITH CONTINUING GERMAN, SWEDISH, DUTCH AND OTHER HELP 10-1 ADVANTAGE COMMUNISTS INITIALLY HAD IN PAID FUNCTIONARIES. PORTUGAL'S ACHILLES HEEL WAS ECONOMY, SOARES SAID; WORKER DISCIPLINE PLUS OUTSIDE HELP FROM EC, US AND OTHERS WAS NOW NEEDED QUICKLY.

3. SPAIN. CZERNETZ SAID SPANISH SOCIALIST LEADER GONZALEZ WAS NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SITUATION IN SPAIN. GONZALEZ THOUGHT THERE WAS SERIOUS DANGER OF COUP FROM FAR RIGHT, AND LEADERS ON LEFT, INCLUDING CARRILLO, WERE BEING CAREFUL NOT TO PUSH TOO HARD EVEN THOUGH THEY FELT PRESSURE HAD TO BE MAINTAINED; QUESTION WAS HOW MUCH PRESSURE TO APPLY, WHEN, AND WHERE? GONZALEZ FEARED, HOWEVER, THAT RANK-AND-FILE ON LEFT MIGHT HAVE MUCH LESS PATIENCE THAN THEIR LEADERS. GONZALEZ THOUGHT ONE AND HALF TO TWO YEARS WAS MINIMUM NEEDED TO CREATE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM AND HE HOPED ABOVE ALL THAT ANOTHER CIVIL WAR COULD BE AVOIDED. CZERNETZ SAID SPANISH COMMUNIST LEADER CARRILLO ASSURED HIM THAT SPANISH COMMUNISTS WOULD RESPECT, AND CONTINUE TO RESPECT, FREE ELECTORAL PROCESSES. CZERNETZ SAID HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED SUCH PROTESTATIONS BUT HE HAD NOTED THAT SPANISH COMMUNISTS WERE MUCH MORE OUTSPOKEN AGAINST CP OR USSR THAN WAS BERLINGER, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF SPANIARDS' EXPERIENCE WITH MOSCOW COMMUNISTS DURING CIVIL WAR; CARRILLO THEREFORE MIGHT NOT BE ANOTHER CUNHAL. CZERNETZ SAID JUNTA, CONVERGENCE, AND SOCIALIST OBSERVERS AT STRASBOURG ALL SEEMED TO AGREE THAT DECISION TO ELECT NEW CORTEZ UNDER NEW LAWS WAS GOOD SIGN FOR FUTURE, BUT ACID TESTS WOULD BE DEGREE OF POLITICAL FREEDOM ALLOWED, GENERAL POLITICAL AMNESTY, AND CHANGE OF ELECTION LAWS ALSO BEFORE FALL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. GONZALEZ TOLD CZERNETZ THAT SOCIALISTS COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS THAT BARRED COMMUNIST PARTY

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PAGE 03 VIENNA 00879 041645Z

WITHOUT SOCIALISTS BEING BRANDED IN CRUCIAL WORKER CONSTITUENCY AS "ALLIES OF FASCISTS."

4. ITALY. ITALIAN SOCIALIST LEADER DEMARTINO TOLD CZERNETZ THAT COMMUNISTS WERE OVERTAKING HIS PARTY ON THE RIGHT; TO OVERCOME THIS, "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" MUST BE PREVENTED AND SOCIALISTS MUST HAVE REAL SAY IN ANY NEW GOVERNMENT THEY JOIN. CZERNETZ

SAID HIS TALKS WITH OTHER ITALIANS CONVINCED HIM THAT
THREAT OF "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" IS NEGLIGIBLE; EVEN IF
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEFT WANTED IT, RIGHT WOULD NOT
ACCEPT IT, AND PARTY WOULD SPLIT IN WAY THAT WOULD
LEAVE NO COMMUNIST-CHRISTIAN MAJORITY. REAL PROBLEM
IN ITALY, CZERNETZ SAID, WAS INCOMPETENCE OF CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP AND ENDEMIC CORRUPTION, ESPECIALLY
IN SOUTH OF ITALY. PENDING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS PULLING
THEMSELVES TOGETHER, CZERNETZ BELIEVES SITUATION IN
ITALY WILL REMAIN UNSTABLE AND DANGEROUS REGARDLESS OF
WHAT SOCIALISTS DO.BUCHANAN

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